



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Warren
LEA Number:	0602702
Superintendent:	Bryan Cornish
Email:	Bryan.cornish@warrensd.org
Contact for Waiver:	Bryan Cornish
Contact Email:	Bryan.cornish@warrensd.org
Contact Phone:	870-226-8500
Date Received by DESE:	

The following documents must be submitted with the waiver request:

- 1. Board resolution approving the waiver request**
- 2. Evidence of stakeholder involvement, including teachers and student families**

Waiver Request #1

Topic:	Teacher Licensure
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	Ark. Code Ann §6-15-1004 Qualified teachers in every public classroom Ark. Code Ann §6-17-309 Certification to teach grade or subject matter Ark. Code Ann §6-17-401 Teacher Licensure Requirement Ark. Code Ann §6-17-902 Definition (definition of a teacher as licensed) Ark. Code Ann §6-17-908 Teacher Salary Fund Ark. Code Ann §6-17-919 Warrants void without valid certification Standard 4-D.1 Teacher licensure requirement of Arkansas Law Standard 4-F.1 Teacher licensure requirement of Arkansas Law Section 7 of Ark. Dept. of Education rules governing education licensure
Duration Requested:	Three Year Waivers
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Ark. Code Ann §6-15-1004, Ark. Code Ann §6-17-309, Ark. Code Ann §6-17-401, Ark. Code Ann §6-17-902, Ark. Code Ann §6-17-919, Standard 4-D.1, Held by Ark. Arts Academy Ark. Code Ann §6-17-908 & Standard 4-F.1, Held by Ark. Virtual Academy Section 7 of Ark. Dept. of Education rules governing education licensure, Held by Ark. Connections Academy
Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To	6-8
PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase Equitable Access to Effective Teachers

1. **Provide a DETAILED RATIONALE explaining how the waiver will enhance student learning opportunities, promote innovation, or increase equitable access to effective teachers. Include information about the problem or obstacle, if any, the waiver will help the district overcome.**

Warren Middle School has been a district conversion charter school since the 2014-2015 school year. The charter will expire at the end of the 2023-2024 school year. The Warren School District Board of Directors voted not to renew the district conversion charter for Warren Middle School at the October 2023 board meeting. With not seeking to renew the charter, Warren Middle School will no longer have the waivers for teacher licensure and will not be able to retain the current ACT 1240 teachers or be able to hire any in the future. Additionally, the Warren School District was granted a waiver for teacher licensure in 2021 for their two elementary schools and high school. Warren Middle School was not included in that waiver due to them already have the waivers for teacher licensure under the charter. The Warren Middle School is seeking the waivers for teacher licensure for three years to align with the other campuses in the district which will allow them to retain their current ACT 1240 teachers and continue to hire teachers under Act 1240 in the future.

Warren Middle School currently has the following teacher licensure waivers under our district conversation charter:

- *Ark. Code Ann §6-17-309 Certification to teach grade or subject matter*
- *Ark. Code Ann §6-17-401 Teacher Licensure Requirement*
- *Ark. Code Ann §6-17-902 Definition (definition of a teacher as licensed)*
- *Ark. Code Ann §6-17-908 Teacher Salary Fund*

- *Ark. Code Ann §6-17-919 Warrants void without valid certification*
- *Standard 4-D.1 Teacher licensure requirement of Arkansas Law*

Warren School District recognizes that a highly qualified teacher in each classroom is the single most important factor influencing student learning. Warren School District's greatest desire is to hire a fully licensed highly qualified teacher for each open position that exists in the district. However, the demand for fully licensed highly qualified teachers far exceeds the number of licensed teachers in our Co-op area. The Warren School District has had 60 openings since 2018 that we could not find licensed teachers to fill regardless of how many recruitment activities we conducted. We have hired 46 Act 1240 teachers and 20 of the college graduates hired have completed a licensure program and now holds an Arkansas Teaching License. Several more are in the process of finishing their requirements for licensure. Currently, Warren Middle School has 11 teachers out of a staff of 28 who were hired under ACT 1240. 5 of the 11 ACT 1240 teachers have obtained full licensure.

We have limited economic resources in the Southeast Co-op area. Limited resources apply not only to our students we teach but also to our college going young adults. This factor makes it hard for some young adults to enter the traditional education program that requires an internship. Tiffani Harton, Warren Middle School teacher, fell into that category. Tiffani Harton always wanted to be a teacher. She graduated from Central Baptist College in Conway unable to fulfill her dream of being a teacher. She was able to go to college on a softball scholarship. She began with two majors, education and kinesiology. Playing softball took all of her time; she could not do observations or internship. So, since the softball scholarship was paying for her degree she had to make the difficult decision to drop the education major and graduated with the kinesiology degree. Tiffani did not give up on her dream of being a teacher. She found a way to enter the MAT program at the UAM and then she applied for a teaching position in our school district. She was hired through the Act 1240 waivers. Having the waiver made it possible for the Warren School District to hire Tiffani. She is such an asset to the middle school. The students connect with her, and she is a key component to so many of our middle school student's success. Tiffani is so innovative and willing to help her students achieve. She videos her lessons and provides the video to all students who are absent or are just struggling with a specific concept and in need of extra support. Tiffani is a fully licensed teacher and this is her fifth year of teaching at Warren. We are so thankful for the waivers that have provided us this wonderful teacher!

Jakki Woodall received her degree from UAM in nursing with the thoughts of working in the healthcare industry. After working a short time as a nurse, she decided this was not what she wanted to do. Jakki pursued a teaching career in a local preschool. Jakki found out that teaching was her dream. Jakki then applied for a job with the Star City School District and was able go in a classroom using the Act 1240 waivers. Jakki was hired at Warren Middle School to teach 7th grade Science under the 1240 waiver and completed her certification this past summer. Jakki has made such a difference with so many students. The key to a successful classroom is the teacher, and Jakki goes to great lengths to make sure her students learn. She has hands on approach to teaching science, and the students are engaged and excited about learning. Jakki is a fully licensed teacher and is in her 2nd year in the Warren School District. Thank you for the opportunity to hire this wonderful teacher who will be with us for many years to come.

The Act 1240 teacher's principal evaluates the teacher using TESS, does classroom walk through observations and provides feedback to ensure that the teacher is using appropriate teaching strategies and has appropriate classroom management. The teachers are provided a mentor paid for by the district and also \$300 for materials for teacher growth. The district content facilitators model exemplary lessons. The lessons are modeled in segments so that feedback from the facilitators can be more effectively given. The district facilitators also help the teachers with lesson and unit planning. They also help organize their classrooms and supplies. The assigned mentor also models lessons and provides valuable feedback to the teachers. The teachers are encouraged to attend the Praxis tutoring sessions provided by the ADE and Southeast Co-op. The teachers are given professional leave time for study time and to take their Praxis exams. The assistant superintendent stays in constant contact with the teachers by email. The superintendent and assistant superintendent meet with the teachers

each year to review their progress toward licensure. In the first year of teaching, the Act 1240 teachers are shielded from committee assignments and sponsorships of clubs to protect their learning time. The district recognizes that the Act 1240 teachers must be supported in the journey toward licensure otherwise the journey becomes overwhelming! It is often stated that the first year of teaching is the hardest so you can imagine what it is like with the added requirements of obtaining a license through an alternate route.

We understand that this avenue for growing our own qualified teachers is a hard journey for both the college graduates and the administrators and teachers that support the Act 1240 teachers' journeys. However, this innovative approach to growing our own teachers works in our area. We have produced far more licensed teachers in our Co-op area than our preferred route of teacher education programs

2. Provide a detailed explanation of how the services being waived will be provided for students.

Student learning opportunities are enhanced when Warren Middle School utilizes Act 1240 teachers instead of long term substitutes in our classrooms for vacancies we cannot fill. When we place highly capable college graduates in a classroom, enroll them in the three-year Novice Teacher Program at Southeast Co-op, assign them a buddy teacher and a mentor at their school, provide daily support, outline the three-year timeline to obtaining a teacher licensure, and support each Act 1240 teacher on their journey to licensure, we enhance student learning. This approach provides a more qualified and committed teacher in the classroom than a long term substitute could ever provide. The Act 1240 teacher is vested in completing a licensure program. The Act 1240 teacher is vested in the learning gains of the students they teach. The Act 1240 teacher is vested in our community. "Our "Grow Our Own" teachers come from our communities. This program puts educators in the classroom that know the reality the students experience at home. The relationship between the teacher and student is incredibly important to student outcomes. Teachers who know their students' lives can support them in academic learning strategies/structures and emotional support systems needed to ensure their students' success.

3. Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver.

The effectiveness of the waiver can be shown by the following. We have filled all of the district's open positions posted on our website. We have printed a copy of the Arkansas License of the Act 1240 teachers who have acquired a license. We have mentor teacher assignment documentation. The principals have documented observations of the teachers. We have school business leave records for Praxis prep sessions and time off to take the Praxis exams. We have documentation of the administrator's meetings to review the teachers progress toward licensure. We have the Mentors Log Books that mentors turn in to the Mentor Coordinator. We have documentation of the district stipend schedule list showing sponsoring of a club, extracurricular activity, and the mentors' stipends. Additionally, the district has partnered with a consultant to support ACT 1240 teachers in studying for the Praxis exam specific to their content area to help ensure success in reaching certification.

RESOLUTION OF THE WARREN SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WHEREAS: The Warren School District is a school district located in rural southeast Arkansas;
and

WHEREAS: The Warren School District recognizes that teachers are the greatest single factor in student learning; and

WHEREAS: The Warren School District is facing extreme challenges in employing licensed teachers for the Warren Middle School; and

WHEREAS: Waivers of certain state laws and administrative rules would allow the Warren Middle School more flexibility in placing teachers in classrooms; and

WHEREAS: district to Act 1240 of 2015, codified at Ark. Code Ann §6-15-103, allows a school petition the State Board of Education for all or some of the waivers granted to an open-enrollment public charter school; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas Virtual Academy, Arkansas Arts Academy, and Arkansas Connections Academy are all open-enrollment public charter schools; and

WHEREAS: The Arkansas State Board of Education granted Arkansas Virtual Academy, Arkansas Arts Academy, and Arkansas Connections Academy a series of waivers, including waivers from Section 4-D.I of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) •Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts; Section 7 of the ADE Rules Governing Educator Licensure and, Title 6 of the Arkansas Code Annotated, including: [1] Ark. Code Ann. §6-15-1004; [2] Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-309; [3] Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-401; [4] Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-902, and [5] Ark. Code Am. §6-17-919.

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, BY THE WARREN SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS, THAT:

Section 1. Pursuant to Act 1240 of 2015, codified at Ark. Code Ann. §6-15-103, the Warren School District Board of Directors hereby requests the following waivers from the Arkansas State Board of Education for the Warren Middle School:

- A. Section 4-1).1 of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Standards of Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts;
- B. Section 7. of the ADE Rules Governing Educator Licensure;
- C. Ark. Code Ann. §6-15-1004;

D. Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-309;

E. Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-401;

F. Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-902;

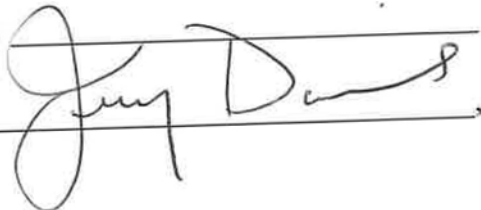
G. Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-919; and

H. Any other such waivers as may legally be required and granted by the Arkansas State Board of Education to give effect to the efforts to place licensed teachers in classrooms.

Section 2. The Warren School District affirms and ratifies the Superintendent's actions in petitioning the Arkansas State Board of Education to grant it the waivers listed in Section 1. of this Resolution for the Warren Middle School.

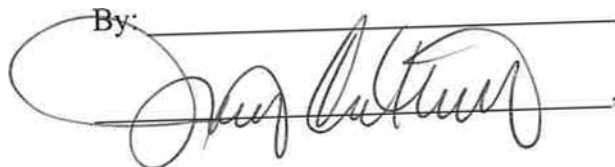
Section 3. Warren School District Board of Directors voted to approve this Resolution on 14, 2023, during an open, regularly scheduled meeting and further authorized its Superintendent to take such actions necessary to submit a copy of this Resolution to the Arkansas State Board of Education.

APPROVED:

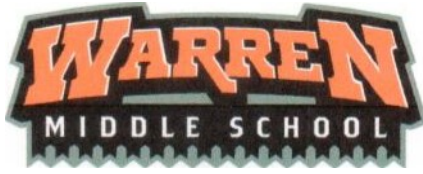
By: 

Board President

ATTEST:

By: 

Board Secretary



PIT CREW AGENDA

Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2023

Time: 11:00 a.m. to 11:40 a.m.

Location: Warren Middle School (check in at the office) and also via Zoom

1. Welcome

11. Minutes From Last Meeting

III. Act 1240 Waiver Information

IV. Set Next Meeting

V. Q/A and Wrap-up VI. End Meeting



PIT CREW Sign-in

Parent/Guest

Student

- 1. Riffamy Holland Spencer Holland
 - 2. _____ M.J. Valentine
 - 3. Antonia Deas Antonia Deas *teacher*
 - 4. Shaun Wilson _____ *teacher*
 - 5. Tiffani Hlaston _____ *teacher*
 - 6. _____ Alley Vance
 - 7. _____ Paulette Torres
 - 8. _____ Zoey Heming
 - 9. _____ Khloe Sigfus
 - 10. _____ Khourtni Johnson
 - 11. _____ Leslie Nelson
 - 12. _____ Erin Savage
 - 13. _____ Cj McGhee
 - 14. _____ Jesani Ridgell
Elijah Hampton
-
- Jaxstyn Ingram
Fatima Masau

Zion Leavison

Amir Mungaz

Ramon Rivera

William

Camacho

Lovely Sedano

Polo Ramero

DeAngelo Herron

Aiden Lewis

Zayde Reeves

Kash Newton